

## § 1915.72

## 29 CFR Ch. XVII (7–1–12 Edition)

### § 1915.72 Ladders.

The provisions of this section shall apply to ship repairing, shipbuilding and shipbreaking.

(a) *General requirements.* (1) The use of ladders with broken or missing rungs or steps, broken or split side rails, or other faulty or defective construction is prohibited. When ladders with such defects are discovered, they shall be immediately withdrawn from service. Inspection of metal ladders shall include checking for corrosion of interiors of open end, hollow rungs.

(2) When sections of ladders are spliced, the ends shall be abutted, and not fewer than 2 cleats shall be securely nailed or bolted to each rail. The combined cross sectional area of the cleats shall be not less than the cross sectional area of the side rail. The dimensions of side rails for their total length shall be those specified in paragraph (b) or (c) of this section.

(3) Portable ladders shall be lashed, blocked or otherwise secured to prevent their being displaced. The side rails of ladders used for access to any level shall extend not less than 36 inches above that level. When this is not practical, grab rails which will provide a secure grip for an employee moving to or from the point of access shall be installed.

(4) Portable metal ladders shall be of strength equivalent to that of wood ladders. Manufactured portable metal ladders provided by the employer shall be in accordance with the provisions of ANSI Standard A14.2-1972: Safety Requirements for Portable Metal Ladders (incorporated by reference, see § 1915.5).

(5) Portable metal ladders shall not be used near electrical conductors nor for electric arc welding operations.

(6) Manufactured portable wood ladders provided by the employer shall be in accordance with the provisions of ANSI Standard A14.1-1975: Safety Requirements for Portable Wood Ladders (incorporated by reference, see § 1915.5).

(b) *Construction of portable wood cleated ladders up to 30 feet in length.* (1) Wood side rails shall be made from West Coast hemlock, Eastern spruce, Sitka spruce, or wood of equivalent strength. Material shall be seasoned, straight-grained wood, and free from shakes, checks, decay or other defects

which will impair its strength. The use of low density woods is prohibited.

(2) Side rails shall be dressed on all sides and kept free of splinters.

(3) All knots shall be sound and hard. The use of material containing loose knots is prohibited. Knots shall not appear on the narrow face of the rail and, when in the side face, shall be not more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in diameter or within  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch of the edge of the rail or nearer than 3 inches to a tread or rung.

(4) Pitch pockets not exceeding  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch in width, 2 inches in length and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in depth are permissible in wood side rails, provided that not more than one such pocket appears in each 4 feet of length.

(5) The width between side rails at the base shall be not less than 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches for ladders 10 feet or less in length. For longer ladders this width shall be increased at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch for each additional 2 feet in length.

(6) Side rails shall be at least 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ ×3 $\frac{5}{8}$  inches in cross section.

(7) Cleats (meaning rungs rectangular in cross section with the wide dimension parallel to the rails) shall be of the material used for side rails, straight-grained and free from knots. Cleats shall be mortised into the edges of the side rails  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch, or filler blocks shall be used on the rails between the cleats. The cleats shall be secured to each rail with three 10d common wire nails or fastened with through bolts or other fasteners of equivalent strength. Cleats shall be uniformly spaced not more than 12 inches apart.

(8) Cleats 20 inches or less in length shall be at least 25/32×3 inches in cross section. Cleats over 20 inches but not more than 30 inches in length shall be at least 25/32×3 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches in cross section.

(c) *Construction of portable wood cleated ladders from 30 to 60 feet in length.* (1) Ladders from 30 to 60 feet in length shall be in accordance with the specifications of paragraph (b) of this section with the following exceptions:

(i) Rails shall be of not less than 2×6 inch lumber.

(ii) Cleats shall be of not less than 1×4 inch lumber.

(iii) Cleats shall be nailed to each rail with five 10d common wire nails or

fastened with through bolts or other fasteners of equivalent strength.

[47 FR 16986, Apr. 20, 1982, as amended at 67 FR 44542, July 3, 2002]

**§ 1915.73 Guarding of deck openings and edges.**

(a) The provisions of this section shall apply to ship repairing and shipbuilding operations and shall not apply to shipbreaking.

(b) When employees are working in the vicinity of flush manholes and other small openings of comparable size in the deck and other working surfaces, such openings shall be suitably covered or guarded to a height of not less than 30 inches, except where the use of such guards is made impracticable by the work actually in progress.

(c) When employees are working around open hatches not protected by coamings to a height of 24 inches or around other large openings, the edge of the opening shall be guarded in the working area to height of 36 to 42 inches, except where the use of such guards is made impracticable by the work actually in progress.

(d) When employees are exposed to unguarded edges of decks, platforms, flats, and similar flat surfaces, more than 5 feet above a solid surface, the edges shall be guarded by adequate guardrails meeting the requirements of § 1915.71(j) (1) and (2), unless the nature of the work in progress or the physical conditions prohibit the use or installation of such guardrails.

(e) When employees are working near the unguarded edges of decks of vessels afloat, they shall be protected by personal flotation devices, meeting the requirements of § 1915.158(a).

(f) Sections of bilges from which floor plates or gratings have been removed shall be guarded by guardrails except where they would interfere with work in progress. If these open sections are in a walkway at least two 10-inch planks placed side by side, or equivalent, shall be laid across the opening to provide a safe walking surface.

(g) Gratings, walkways, and catwalks, from which sections or ladders have been removed, shall be barricaded with adequate guardrails.

[47 FR 16986, Apr. 20, 1982, as amended at 67 FR 44542, July 3, 2002]

**§ 1915.74 Access to vessels.**

(a) *Access to vessels afloat.* The employer shall not permit employees to board or leave any vessel, except a barge or river towboat, until the following requirements have been met:

(1) Whenever practicable, a gangway of not less than 20 inches walking surface of adequate strength, maintained in safe repair and safely secured shall be used. If a gangway is not practicable, a substantial straight ladder, extending at least 36 inches above the upper landing surface and adequately secured against shifting or slipping shall be provided. When conditions are such that neither a gangway nor a straight ladder can be used, a Jacob's ladder meeting the requirements of paragraphs (d) (1) and (2) of this section may be used.

(2) Each side of such gangway, and the turn table if used, shall have a railing with a minimum height of approximately 33 inches measured perpendicularly from rail to walking surface at the stanchion, with a midrail. Rails shall be of wood, pipe, chain, wire or rope and shall be kept taut at all times.

(3) Gangways on vessels inspected and certificated by the U.S. Coast Guard are deemed to meet the foregoing requirements, except in cases where the vessel's regular gangway is not being used.

(4) The gangway shall be kept properly trimmed at all times.

(5) When a fixed tread accommodations ladder is used, and the angle is low enough to require employees to walk on the edge of the treads, cleated duckboards shall be laid over and secured to the ladder.

(6) When the lower end of a gangway overhangs the water between the ship and the dock in such a manner that there is danger of employees falling between the ship and the dock, a net or other suitable protection shall be rigged at the foot of the gangway in such a manner as to prevent employees from falling from the end of the gangway.

(7) If the foot of the gangway is more than one foot away from the edge of the apron, the space between them shall be bridged by a firm walkway